CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1 1. A method of responding to a request for data about an enterprise, the method
2 comprising the steps of:
3 storing a plurality of names for a single entity associated with the enterprise as a first
4 plurality of corresponding concepts in a database of concepts and relationships
5 among concepts, which database describes a plurality of entities associated
6 with the enterprise;
7 designating a first concept of the first plurality of corresponding concepts as a
8 normative concept;
9 receiving a request including data indicating a particular name of the plurality of
10 names; and
11 in response to receiving the request, sending a response including information
12 associated in the database with the first concept.

1 2. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
2 storing in the database a first relationship of a first relationship type, the first
3 relationship defined for the first concept and an alternative concept of the first
4 plurality of corresponding concepts; and
5 storing in the database a second relationship of a second relationship type between the
6 first concept and a second concept not among the first plurality of
7 corresponding concepts,
8 wherein the second concept indicates the information included in the response.

1 3. The method of Claim 2, wherein:
2 the request does not include data indicating a first name corresponding to the first
3 concept;
4 the particular name corresponds to a particular alternative concept of the first plurality
5 of corresponding concepts; and

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6   the database does not include a relationship defined for the second concept and the

7   particular alternative concept.

1 4. The method of Claim 1, wherein the request does not include data indicating a first

2 name corresponding to the first concept.

1 5. The method of Claim 1, wherein the plurality of names include at least one of a

2 synonym for a first name corresponding to the first concept, an acronym for the first name,

3 and a translation of the first name into a different language than a language of the first name.

1 6. The method of Claim 2, wherein the first relationship includes an attribute indicating

2 the alternative concept is one of a synonym for the first concept, an acronym for the first

3 concept, and a translation into a different language than a language of a first name

4 corresponding to the first concept.

1 7. The method of Claim 5, wherein a synonym for the first name includes a misspelling

2 of the first name.

1 8. The method of Claim 5, wherein a synonym for the first name comprises an acronym

2 of the first concept or a translation into a different language than a language of a first name

3 corresponding to the first concept.

1 9. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of adding a name to the plurality

2 of names based on the data included in the request.

1 10. The method of Claim 1, wherein the entities include at least one of a set of products of

2 the enterprise, a set of services of the enterprise and a set of activities of the enterprise.

1 11. The method of Claim 10, wherein the set of activities of the enterprise include at least

2 one of administration, research, marketing, joint ventures and documentation.

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1   12.   A computer-readable medium carrying one or more sequences of instructions for
2   responding to a request for data about an enterprise, which instructions, when executed by
3   one or more processors, cause the one or more processors to carry out the steps of:
4   storing a plurality of names for a single entity associated with the enterprise as a first
5   plurality of corresponding concepts in a database of concepts and relationships
6   among concepts, which database describes a plurality of entities associated
7   with the enterprise;
8   indicating a first concept of the first plurality of corresponding concepts;
9   receiving a request including data indicating a particular name of the plurality of
10   names; and
11   in response to receiving the request, sending a response including information
12   associated in the database with the first concept.

1   13.   The computer-readable medium of Claim 12, the instructions further cause the one or
2   more processors to carry out the steps of:
3   storing in the database a first relationship of a first relationship type, the first
4   relationship defined for the first concept and an alternative concept of the first
5   plurality of corresponding concepts; and
6   storing in the database a second relationship of a second relationship type between the
7   first concept and a second concept not among the first plurality of
8   corresponding concepts,
9   wherein the second concept indicates the information included in the response.

1   14.   The computer-readable medium of Claim 13, wherein:
2   the request does not include data indicating a first name corresponding to the first
3   concept;
4   the particular name corresponds to a particular alternative concept of the first plurality
5   of corresponding concepts; and
6   the database does not include a relationship defined for the second concept and the
7   particular alternative concept.

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1   15.   The computer-readable medium of Claim 12, wherein the request does not include

2   data indicating a first name corresponding to the first concept.

1   16.   The computer-readable medium of Claim 12, wherein the plurality of names include

2   at least one of a synonym for a first name corresponding to the first concept, an acronym for

3   the first name, and a translation of the first name into a different language than a language of

4   the first name.

1   17.   The computer-readable medium of Claim 13, wherein the first relationship includes

2   an attribute indicating the alternative concept is one of a synonym for the first concept, an

3   acronym for the first concept, and a translation into a different language than a language of a

4   first name corresponding to the first concept.

1   18.   The computer-readable medium of Claim 16, wherein a synonym for the first name

2   includes a misspelling of the first name.

1   19.   The computer-readable medium of Claim 12, wherein the instructions further cause

2   the one or more processors to carry out the step of adding a name to the plurality of names

3   based on the data included in the request.

1   20.   The computer-readable medium of Claim 12, wherein the entities include at least one

2   of a set of products of the enterprise, a set of services of the enterprise and a set of activities

3   of the enterprise.

1   21.   The computer-readable medium of Claim 20, wherein the set of activities of the

2   enterprise include at least one of administration, research, marketing, joint ventures and

3   documentation.

1 22. A system for responding to a request for data about an enterprise, the system
2   comprising:
3   a means for storing a plurality of names for a single entity associated with the
4   enterprise;
5   a means for indicating a first name of the plurality of names;
6   a means for receiving a request including data indicating a particular name of the
7   plurality of names; and
8   a means for sending a response including information associated in a database with
9   the first name in response to receiving the request, which database describes a
10   plurality of entities associated with the enterprise.

1 23. The system of Claim 22, further comprising:
2   a means for storing a first relationship of a first relationship type, the first relationship
3   defined for the first name and an alternative name of the plurality of names;
4   and
5   a means for storing a second relationship of a second relationship type between the
6   first name and particular information not among the plurality of names,
7   wherein the particular information is the information included in the response.

1 24. The system of Claim 23, wherein:
2   the request does not include data indicating the first name;
3   the database does not include a relationship defined for the particular information and
4   the particular name.

1 25. The system of Claim 22, wherein the request does not include data indicating the first
2   name.

1   26.   The system of Claim 22, wherein the plurality of names include at least one of a

2   synonym for the first name, an acronym for the first name, and a translation of the first name

3   into a different language than a language of the first name.

1   27.   The system of Claim 23, wherein the first relationship includes an attribute indicating

2   the alternative name is one of a synonym for the first name, an acronym for the first name,

3   and a translation into a different language than a language of the first name.

1   28.   The system of Claim 26, wherein a synonym for the first name includes a misspelling

2   of the first name.

1   29.   The system of Claim 22, further comprising a means for adding a name to the

2   plurality of names based on the data included in the request.

1   30.   The system of Claim 22, wherein the entities include at least one of a set of products

2   of the enterprise, a set of services of the enterprise and a set of activities of the enterprise.

1   31.   The system of Claim 30, wherein the set of activities of the enterprise include at least

2   one of administration, research, marketing, joint ventures and documentation.

1   32.   A system for responding to a request for data about an enterprise, the system

2   comprising:

3   a database of concepts and relationships among concepts describing a plurality of

4   entities associated with the enterprise; and

5   a processor configured to perform the steps of

6   storing a plurality of names for a single entity associated with the enterprise as

7   a first plurality of corresponding concepts in the database;

8   indicating a first concept of the first plurality of corresponding concepts;

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9   receiving a request including data indicating a particular name of the plurality

10   of names; and

11   in response to receiving the request, sending a response including information

12   associated in the database with the first concept.

1   33.   The system of Claim 32, the processor further configured to perform the steps of:

2   storing in the database a first relationship of a first relationship type, the first

3   relationship defined for the first concept and an alternative concept of the first

4   plurality of corresponding concepts; and

5   storing in the database a second relationship of a second relationship type between the

6   first concept and a second concept not among the first plurality of

7   corresponding concepts,

8   wherein the second concept indicates the information included in the response.

1   34.   The system of Claim 33, wherein:

2   the request does not include data indicating a first name corresponding to the first

3   concept;

4   the particular name corresponds to a particular alternative concept of the first plurality

5   of corresponding concepts; and

6   the database does not include a relationship defined for the second concept and the

7   particular alternative concept.

1   35.   The system of Claim 32, wherein the request does not include data indicating a first

2   name corresponding to the first concept.

1   36.   The system of Claim 32, wherein the plurality of names include at least one of a

2   synonym for a first name corresponding to the first concept, an acronym for the first name,

3   and a translation of the first name into a different language than a language of the first name.

1   37.   The system of Claim 33, wherein the first relationship includes an attribute indicating

2   the alternative concept is one of a synonym for the first concept, an acronym for the first

3   concept, and a translation into a different language than a language of a first name

4   corresponding to the first concept.

1   38.   The system of Claim 36, wherein a synonym for the first name includes a misspelling

2   of the first name.

1   39.   The system of Claim 32, the processor further configured to perform the step of

2   adding a name to the plurality of names based on the data included in the request.

1   40.   The system of Claim 32, wherein the entities include at least one of a set of products

2   of the enterprise, a set of services of the enterprise and a set of activities of the enterprise.

1   41.   The system of Claim 40, wherein the set of activities of the enterprise include at least

2   one of administration, research, marketing, joint ventures and documentation.

1   42.   A method of responding to a request for data about an enterprise using a data store

2   that comprises a stored plurality of names for a single entity associated with the enterprise, a

3   first plurality of corresponding concepts in a database of concepts and relationships among

4   concepts, which database describes a plurality of entities associated with the enterprise, and

5   wherein a first concept of the first plurality of corresponding concepts is identified as a

6   normative concept, the method comprising the computer-implemented steps of:

7   receiving a request including data indicating a particular name of the plurality of

8   names; and

9   in response to receiving the request, sending a response including information

10   associated in the database with the first concept.

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